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HOMEMAKERS' CHAT

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U. S. DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF INFORMATION

(Release on receipt)

SUBJECT: "Better Nutrition for Children" ... Information from the Extension
nutritionist, U. S. Department of Agriculture

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More milk and more foods rich in Vitamin C, D and riboflavin.

That doesn't sound like medicine. But that's what the "doctor" ordered to bring better health to the children in the state of Maine. The "doctor" in this case is the Maine State Nutrition Committee.

Evidence that children of Maine---like children in other states--suffer from "hidden hunger" is shown in a series of studies made during the past 10 years by the Nutrition Committee.

In one of these studies---a nutritionist, a physician and a dental hygienist examined school children in four towns. They conducted the examinations in the spring and again in the fall. They checked on weight and height...rate of growth...posture...condition of the children's bones and feet and condition of their teeth and gums.

And the examiners found evidence of malnutrition and "hidden hunger".

For example...many of the children had bone defects such as flat feet, bow legs, and knock knees...indicating they had suffered from a more or less mild form of ricketts when they were younger. This--because they had not received as much Vitamin D as they needed.

The examiners found another bit of evidence in the number of cases of inflamed gums...a condition which could be traced to a lack of food rich in Vitamin C.

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There were other indications of hidden hunger. Some of the children were scrawny and underweight. Others had enlarged thyroid glands. Still others suffered from anemia. They did not have enough hemoglobin in their blood for good health and energy.

So the nutrition committee set about to combat this "hidden hunger" they found in Maine school children.

Success in the fight against "hidden hunger" means changes in the children's food habits. And this is what the committee asked the children to do.

One - Drink enough milk--"A glass of milk at every meal."

Two - Eat more fruits and vegetables especially of types high in Vitamin C--"At least one serving of orange, grapefruit, tomato, raw cabbage or other good source of Vitamin C every day." Also eat more green and yellow kinds which have a high Vitamin A value.

Then the nutrition committee told the mothers: "Help give your child's bones and teeth a good start by taking cod liver oil (or other Vitamin D supplement) during pregnancy. Then by giving it to the baby after he is two or three weeks old...and continuing it at least through the pre-school years."

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